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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR (Kaliningrad Oblast)	REPORT	[redacted]
SUBJECT	Air Activity Observed over Gvardeysk	DATE DISTR.	18 October 1943
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25X1

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
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25X1

1. Between 9 July and 25 December 1953, air activity by single-jet aircraft with considerably swept-back wings and without auxiliary fuel tanks was continuously observed over Gvardeysk (formerly Tapiau). The observations were made from the Gvardeysk camp, which was housed in the former mental hospital on the southern bank of Pregel River. Formation flights, high-altitude flights, low-level flights, and firing at towed sleeve targets were practiced. Informant occasionally observed intensive night flying activity, firing at towed sleeve targets with searchlights in operation, and bad weather flights. Air activity was usually conducted by two aircraft, often by five or six aircraft. Sometimes, two formations of four aircraft each were seen flying at a distance of about three kilometers and staggered at different altitudes. Air activity was particularly heavy in good weather. Occasionally, flights were made over the camp at treetop level. During the day, several jet aircraft fired at sleeve targets towed by another jet at 2,000 to 3,000 meters altitude. On clear nights in the summer and fall, firing at sleeve targets was repeatedly practiced while six or seven searchlights, apparently located in the vicinity of Gvardeysk, were in operation. Shortly after the searchlight located the sleeve target, firing apparently by aircraft cannons

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25X1

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was heard. These practices usually lasted three to four hours, sometimes with long intervals between individual approaches. When the weather was rainy and the visibility poor, jet aircraft were seen making low-level flights individually and in elements of two over the camp.

2. Between July and December 1953, intensive air activity was observed over Gvardeysk in good weather. No airfield was observed in the vicinity. Air activity involved single-jet aircraft with considerably swept-back wings; twin-engine aircraft, each with radial engines, a single rudder assembly, and a nose without glass; Dakota-type aircraft; cargo gliders; and biplanes. Most of the aircraft participating in air activity were jet aircraft, which usually flew in formations of two or three. A maximum of eight jet aircraft were seen flying in V formation. Occasionally loops were performed. Two or three jet fighters repeatedly attacked a sleeve target towed by another jet aircraft. The aircraft usually departed toward the north-east.
3. During summer and fall 1953, but not as late as November, twin-engine piston aircraft approached in formations of 15 to 18, coming from the east. The aircraft usually flew at low level and red stars were observed on their wings. Shortly after the aircraft departed toward the west, there were noises and percussions apparently from bombing practices. Soon the formations returned, headed toward the east. This air activity was repeated on successive days and then discontinued for about 14 days.
4. Twice in October 1953, nine twin-engine aircraft were seen towing cargo gliders at great distances from each other. The cargo gliders were approximately the same size as the Dakota-type towing aircraft. The aircraft flew from east to west at an altitude of about 500 meters. Releasing of the gliders was not observed. During daytime in favorable weather, biplanes were continuously seen approaching from various directions at an altitude of about 400 meters. No formation flights or aerobatics were made by biplanes. Once between July and December 1953, three four-engine aircraft, apparently very obsolete types, crossed over Gvardeysk. No jet aircraft were observed other than those mentioned (see paragraph 2).

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25X1